



July 1, 2003

Volume 22
Summer Edition

GREENSBORO

GDOT TRAFFIC ZONE



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FROM THE DIRECTOR

GDOT Services...High Community Value and Impact!

It's official...GDOT services have a significant impact on our community and perceived quality of life in Greensboro! The leadership team recently completed an extensive and comprehensive survey and scan of the community to determine the impact of our services and to identify areas for improvement. Overall, citizens are pleased with transportation in Greensboro and our services. 70% rate their experience with transportation in getting around Greensboro as excellent, very good, and good. While 30% rate their experience as fair to poor. As for our services, 80% rate our services (and there delivery) as excellent, very good, and good. While only 20% rate our services as fair to poor.

Key expectations citizens have of GDOT include providing high quality work, providing good (multi-modal) planning, and desire to be informed, educated, and involved in our projects. Primary dissatisfactions include the flow of traffic on our roads during peak traffic periods (i.e., concern with traffic congestion and aggressive driving); concerns with roadway maintenance – specifically ride quality and asphalt repairs; desire to continue to provide more convenient parking and enhancements to parking deck safety; dissatisfaction with the conditions of bus stops and a need to provide more information about services and routes; and need for more sidewalks to establish better connections to destinations and other travel modes.

So what does all of this mean? First, it means that we (GDOT) are generally doing a good job in meeting the needs and service expectations of our community. Second, it means that we generally have broad based support from the community to continue to make service enhancements and improvements. And third and most importantly, it means that our services have a significant impact on our community and directly impact the perceived quality of life in Greensboro!

Where do we go from here? As with any survey, the findings reflect a "snap shot in time" and are subject to change without continued hard work and improvement. For GDOT this means that over the next 2-3 months, we will collectively begin to more fully explore the survey findings and begin to focus our follow-up efforts on a few key strategic priorities. These include identifying ways to enhancement (GDOT/GTA) market-



Jim Westmoreland, Director

ing and communications; enhancing our focus on multi-modal planning, project implementation, and citizen involvement; and developing a renewed internal focus on quality (work and services).

In closing, to me the survey findings reflect and reaffirm much of what I already knew about GDOT. Our services, and our employees highly supported, highly valued, and highly impactful! However, to continue to grow and excel, we must all be willing to use and learn from the stakeholder feed-back (remember citizens perceptions are their/our realities), maintain and build upon our good points and strengths, improve and address our weaknesses. Continued thanks to each of you for making GDOT an outstanding department and for the impact you have on our community! Keep up the great work, stay safe, and don't forget to take some time off to spend with your family or friends this summer.



BUSINESS/PARKING



Administration

The Lawson “Scare” is over.

Since the implementation of the Lawson system in January 2003, the Administration staff has experienced numerous glitches within the system, which caused many employee concerns. One of the most controversial issues was the duplication of leave entries that caused inaccuracies in employees’ leave balances. It was discovered that once leave entries were made into Lawson, the system would automatically reboot during the running of payroll, and add the same information again; thus causing the same entry to be added twice. This was very stressful for our employees because we were in the middle of the holiday season with many planning annual leave. The possibility of their leave being incorrect was a big issue. After 2-3 months of closely working with the Human Resources Department, duplicate leave entries were corrected! Now that many of the glitches within Lawson are resolved, the system has proven to be faster and easier to access employee information. It has improved the accuracy of information through reducing error rates, which in turn, has improved the overall satisfaction level of our employees.

HIPAA Highlights

HIPAA stands for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. It means that all health related information pertaining to you and / or your family members is now protected and cannot be shared within the workplace without your permission. The only people that have the right to know are your supervisor (and anyone they may report to), and the administrative people who handle your health and dental insurance information. Anything that you would normally report to your supervisor still gets reported to your supervisor. This does not change what a supervisor has the right to know, only what they have the right to share. Every GDOT employee will be responsible for informing us when they want information about a birth or death in the family to be shared with their coworkers. Every GDOT employee will be required to either give verbal or written permission to release medical information (illness, hospitalization, surgery, etc.) regarding themselves or family members. If you encounter a situation that you’re unsure about, please contact Karen Marineau 412-3926 or Ja’Tia Brown 412-6309 at the Service Center. When in doubt, call us!

Employee Highlights

Tonya Williams is GDOT’s representative on the City’s Employee Recognition Committee; her term begins on July 1, 2003 and will run for three years. Employee Recognition Committee encourages excellence and maintain high morale in the workforce by providing and coordinating events to recognize employees for excellence on the job and their outstanding contributions to the City organization.

Parking

The Davie St. Deck is finally ready to undergo structural repairs and renovation. There are a few more stages of finalizing the selection of contractor, award of a contractor and City Council approval, etc. The effective relocation date for the monthly and transient parkers is Wednesday, July 16, 2003. All monthly parkers will be notified to relocate to either Bellemeade St. or the Church St. parking decks. Signage will be placed at each of the entrances re-directing transient parkers to the closest parking deck. The final completion date for this project is scheduled for December 12, 2003. During this time, there will also be internal enhancements that will be worked on by internal staff as well as other sub-contractors to give the deck a new facelift.



The Greene St. Deck is still in a project mode for the relighting of the parking deck. Each level has been completed at this time. The contractor will begin relighting of the elevator/stairwell lobby areas in the towers on the Washington St. and Greene St. sides of the deck. There will also be new lighting installed on each level at the doorways leading into the elevator/stairwell lobbies. In the very near future, each of the elevators will be undergoing an upgrade to be in compliance with the American Disabilities Act.

Parking is looking to partner with DGI to pursue exterior lighting designs for the Greene St. Deck in the near future. These are exciting times in Parking with all the changes taking place. Stay tuned as we continue to move Parking forward!



Coliseum ITS Upgrades Completed

A series of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) upgrades were completed just in time for the 2003 ACC Men's Basketball Tournament. To assist with directing traffic for coliseum events, GDOT installed two new dynamic message signs (DMS) around the Coliseum. The new signs are LED based and offer greatly improved visibility over the old flip-disk signs. In addition, the existing cameras on the rooftop of the Greensboro Coliseum and the Sheraton Four Seasons were upgraded to state-of-the-art dome type cameras. These cameras offer many improvements over the older cameras including greatly improved lens quality, low-light visibility and pan-tilt-zoom speed. The addition of these items enable GDOT to keep a close eye on traffic during major coliseum events and quickly relay traffic/parking information to Coliseum patrons. Many thanks to all those that helped out with the installation of these devices.



Eastern Guilford Rail Traffic Separation Study

The NCDOT Rail Division is currently conducting a study of 23 public at-grade crossings of the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR) corridor in eastern Guilford County. The studied crossings include all those between Dudley St and the Guilford County Line. The study team reviewed existing crossing conditions and will be making recommendations for short, mid-term and long-term recommendations. These recommendations vary from adding median barriers and new gates to recommendations for grade separations at various intersections. The study team has recently completed public meetings to receive comments on the recommendations. A final report for the study is scheduled to be released in July 2003.

CROSSING	SHORT-TERM (<2 yrs)	MID-TERM (2-5 yrs)	LONG-TERM (5-10 yrs)
Dudley St	Add median barriers		Grade separation
Gillespie St	Add median barriers, longer gates arms,		Grade separation
English St			GDOT recommending grade
Holts Chapel Rd	Remove rail siding & relocate 4-quadrant gates		
Pine St	Add longer gate arms, reduce hump		
Lowdermilk St	Close crossing, provide turnaround &		
Franklin Blvd		Perform preliminary engineering for grade separation	Grade separate & reconstruct Burlington Rd
O'Ferrell St	Add longer gate arms, reduce hump	Close crossing w/Naco Rd extension, provide turnaround & landscaping	
Ward Rd		Widen road at crossing, reinstall railroad signal	Grade separate, realign w/ Penny Rd. Reconstruct Burlington Rd / US 70





Street Connectivity Update

November 2002, City Council adopted a new street connectivity policy. This policy is applied when a developer proposes to either extend and connect two or more existing stub streets from two or more existing established neighborhoods through a vacant parcel being developed, or extend and connect an existing stub street from an existing established neighborhood through a vacant parcel being developed to a thoroughfare. This new policy requires GDOT with the help of other departments to evaluate the positives and negatives of proposed street connections based on nine different criteria. The criteria evaluate things such as emergency response times, block lengths, pedestrian needs, potential for extraneous traffic, and environmental impacts to determine if a connection is warranted. If a connection is warranted, GDOT is also responsible for holding a public information meeting with the adjoining property owners to give them an opportunity to present additional information about potential impacts from the proposed connection, prior to final approval of the plans. This new policy should continue to encourage street connections that are consistent with the comprehensive plan for smart growth, while discouraging unneeded connections that could harm existing neighborhoods.



2003 Traffic Safety Program

The Traffic Safety Program is an annual program that identifies locations within the city limits that experience unusual accident activity, which includes accident patterns that are occurring on a frequent basis or accidents that result in serious or fatal injury. Intersections for this year's Traffic Safety Program have been identified and are currently under study. Collision Diagrams are being constructed for each intersection at this time. The collision diagram will aid in identifying problems at each intersection and assist in developing solutions to decrease accidents.

Pace Car Program

This new program allows citizens to deter speeding on neighborhood streets by using their own vehicle. Participants of the Pace Car Program pledge to drive within the speed limit on city streets, stop at all stop signs, stop to let pedestrians cross, be courteous to bicyclists, and display a Pace Car sticker in their vehicle. This program is another tool provided by GDOT that allows citizens to participate in traffic calming. The kick-off for this program will be coming soon and will target neighborhood associations and GDOT employees. Are you willing to take the pledge?

US 29 Access Management Study

The project limits of the US 29 Corridor Study will be from I-40/I-85 north to Sixteenth Street. The purpose of this study is to identify short term and intermediate improvements. The outcome will be an access and circulation plan that will maximize safety and minimize transportation conflicts. The plan will establish guidelines for intersection design improvements, interchange spacing, driveway design parameters, and off-street and on-street parking regulations at exits and on nearby streets and median design. The goal is to develop strategies suitable to the Greensboro communities that improve mobility and safety within the corridor while maintaining accessibility to adjacent land uses.





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Railroad Bridge Replacement Feasibility Studies

There are four railroad bridge replacement feasibility studies. The following are the Norfolk Southern Railroad bridges proposed to be studied:

- Aycock Street @ UNCG
- Tate Street @ UNCG
- East Market Street @ NCA&TSU
- Benbow Road @ NCA&TSU

The purpose of these studies are to identify street intersection improvements and to bring existing bridges up to current standards at these four locations. This will increase capacity and enhance safety for the public.

Signal System Replacement

The replacement of the Greensboro signal system is now included in the TIP for funding in 2008. The projected cost is 15 million dollars. Replacement of all field control equipment as well as central computer hardware software is planned. Additionally, the communications plant will be converted from existing twisted copper wire to more reliable fiber optic cable. In the interim, a project is planned to upgrade existing serial communications boards and graphics monitoring functions. Both are very outdated and subject to becoming unreliable and/or inoperable. The equipment currently used for both functions is no longer manufactured.

Dallas Phasing Update

Work is planned to install a special mode of leading/lag left turn phasing at the intersection of Green Valley Road and Lendew Street. This phasing was initially used in Dallas, Texas and is currently used most widely in the State of Texas. This phasing uses a five-section left turn signal with the circular indications shielded so they are visible only from the left turn lane. This will be accomplished with the use of signal louvers. The use of louvers is not common in Greensboro and this equipment is currently on order.

Street Lighting

In conjunction with the East Market Street project, pedestrian lighting is planned at three railroad underpasses. The installation of the lighting was challenging in that legal agreements were required with Norfolk Southern Railway as well as North Carolina Railroad Company. The underpasses that will be lighted are on Friendly Avenue and Market Street between Church Street and Murrow Boulevard as well as on Benbow Road south of Market Street. Michael Covington deserves kudos for keeping this railroad project on going.



Two key projects involving the Planning Division are profiled in this edition of *The Traffic Zone*: the *Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan* and the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan Update.

Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan

The City Council's adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in May marked the end of a three year development process. This process was led by a Citizen Steering Committee, with staff support of the Planning Department and their consultant. The process included regular involvement from a range of departments—including GDOT.



The Plan includes a Community Vision – a statement of the community's shared aspirations and goals for its future—as well as policies, strategies, and action steps for Land Use, Community Character, Housing and Neighborhoods, Economic Development, Transportation, Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure, and Implementation. Transportation is key to the vision, as well as to the rest of the plan. The Vision for transportation can be summarized briefly as, "A functional, well integrated transportation system that provides connections and choices to move about Greensboro and the Triad.

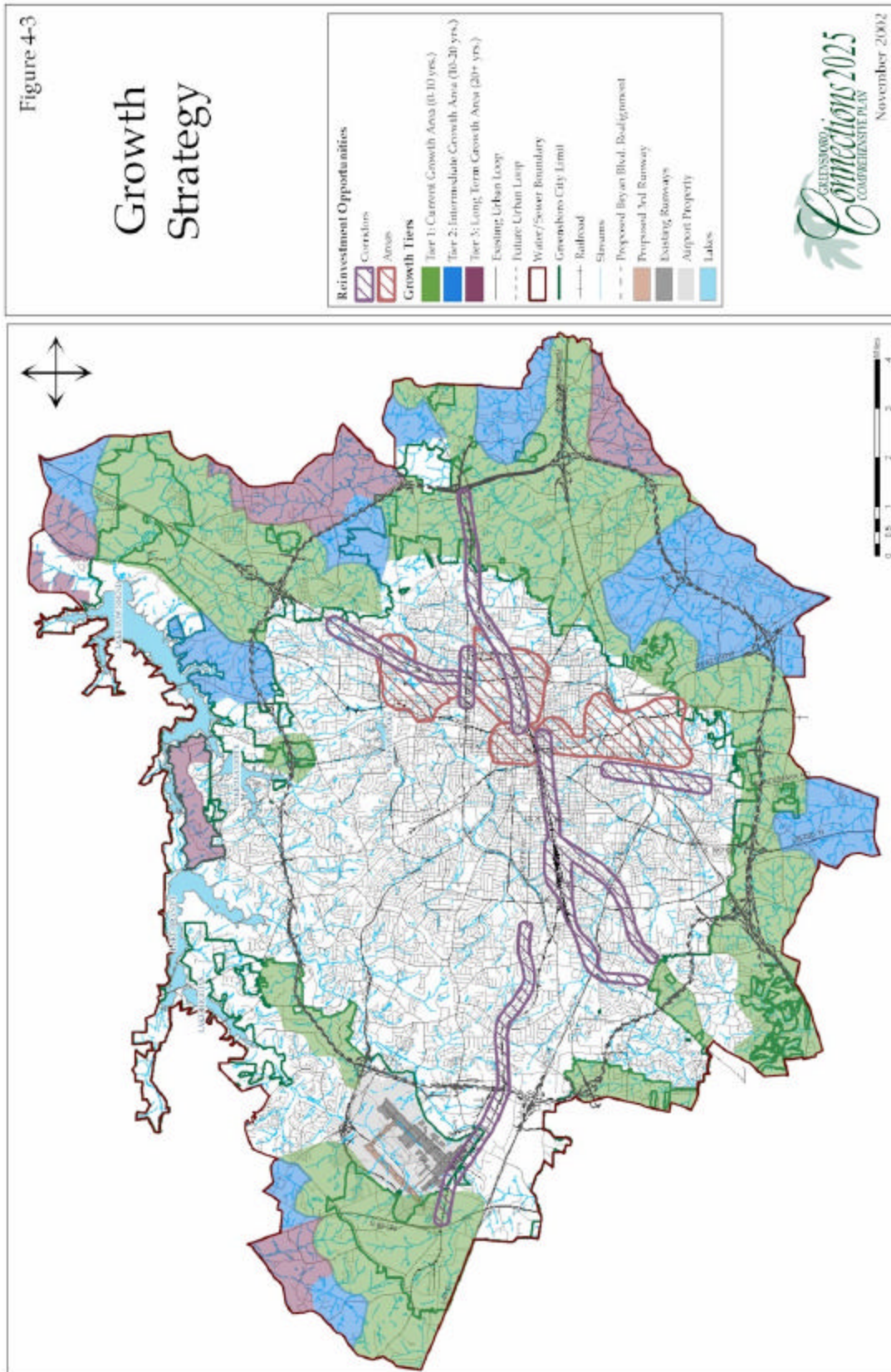
Adoption of the Plan was really the start of Phase II of the project – the implementation stage. From a GDOT perspective, this is where things start to get really interesting. The Implementation timeline includes three periods: short range (within the first year), mid-range (within 2-3 years) and Long Range (within 4-10 years). The implementation plan is particularly aggressive in the first year—including 44 implementation steps, most of which involve their own inter-departmental implementation committee. At current count, GDOT is a member of around 20 teams, with responsibility to lead nine of them.

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will challenge GDOT and the City organization, in terms of time, staff resources, and in the development of practical and effective solutions to meet the intent of the plan. However, it is also a real opportunity for the organization to collectively rise to the challenge, and thereby improve the quality of life, economic competitiveness, and infrastructure in the years ahead.

Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Federal planning and air quality rules require the Metropolitan Planning Organization to update the Long Range Transportation Plan by October 2004. The MPO will take this opportunity to thoroughly review and update the Thoroughfare Plan, develop a Collector Street Plan to cover in the growth areas of the MPO, and reassess the projects and investment priorities proposed in the fiscally constrained transportation plan for roadways and public transportation. The update will be closely coordinated with GTA's Mobility Greensboro Long Range Public Transportation Plan. Also, it will address several of the year one implementation steps for the Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Work is expected to kick off in July. Look for more information in future editions of *The Traffic Zone*!





OPERATIONS

Safety

It's that time of year. The weather is heating up and those special summertime hazards are out and about once again.



One of the most dangerous summertime hazards people are exposed to is extreme heat, whether they work indoors or out. Remind employees that getting proper treatment at the first sign of any heat-related problem can be key to staying safe. Symptoms include:

Change in overall demeanor. Disoriented and, confused. If you notice someone like this get them into a cool area and get them to sip cool not cold water.

Lack of perspiration. Sweat cools the body. Once someone has ceased sweating the body cannot regulate itself. This is a heat stroke. Notify help immediately. Cool the person's body immediately and seek medical attention.

Keep cool to keep safe. Take time to become adjusted to outside heat conditions. Drink plenty of water, 8 glasses a day. Encourage workers to wear lighter clothes and to take more frequent breaks.

Courtesy *Safety Compliance Alert*, 6/12/03



Storm Water Maintenance

Sticks, Sticks and more Sticks, crews have spent the majority of their time the first part of the year battling winter storms and picking up storm debris. I would like to extend to a huge thank you to all those that have been involved in assisting with the snow and ice removal program and storm debris removal.

We have been trying to get back into our regular business of maintenance, and guess what, more distractions, RAIN....We have had our share of rain the year, over 12" above normal. Crews have been spending a great deal of time checking and cleaning culverts, creeks and removing debris as a result of the ice storms. There has been an increase of cave ins due to the heavy rains, but fortunately no major flooding.

We have been working with the Storm Water Services Section on some potential large projects.

I am pleased to announce that Jeff Nelson has been promoted to Super Team Leader, Congratulations Jeff!

We look forward to a busy and productive summer. And remember....be safe.

Street Cleaning

The Street Cleaning Section had another successful Loose Leaf Season. The Season lasted longer than expected, due to the winter storms, but we made it through. And we collected 10,336 tons of leaves. The Street Cleaning Section would like to thank all who helped during our longest leaf season yet.

We would like to welcome a new employee to the Street Cleaning Section: Donald Miller. He joined our Section on June 16, 2003.

Our first round of sweeping should be completed by the first week of June. Due to the storm debris, it has taken us longer than usual. But we are striving to get back on schedule as diligently as possible.

The Litter Section is going through an assessment of each job they perform. The first stage of the assessment is complete. The whole assessment should be completed by the beginning of Loose Leaf Season 2003-04.

For those of you that don't know, the Street Cleaning Section has moved its operations from the Trailer next to the wash pit to the Old Radio Shop. Stop by and see our new office space.

The Adopt-A-Street program is continually growing. We currently have 86 members.

Last year around this time we had completed two Beautification Projects on illegal dumpsites and are in the process of selecting two more locations for this year. We will keep you posted on the progress.





OPERATIONS



Warehouse

The Warehouse, along with Vince Price of the Sign Shop, held the "GDOT Spring Fling Golf Tournament 2003" on Friday May 16, 2003 at Holley Ridge Golf Course. We had a fairly good turnout this year. The first place team finishing at 13 under par, the next 4 teams at 12 under and the last place team at 6 under. Everyone received prizes and a nice lunch just for attending. We should have our annual "GDOT Fall Brawl Golf Tournament 2003" around September or October.

The warehouse staff is currently performing inventory cycle counts to prepare for our annual audit on Friday June 27, 2003. GTA's annual parts audit will be performed on Monday June 30, 2003.

The GDOT warehouse, with much needed assistance from Mike Cramer, is taking the lead on the possibility of maintaining our inventory on the new Lawson ERP system, but are still on hold at this point. When moving forward with this project, we expect Water Resources and Building Maintenance to come on board as well.

Back To Basics

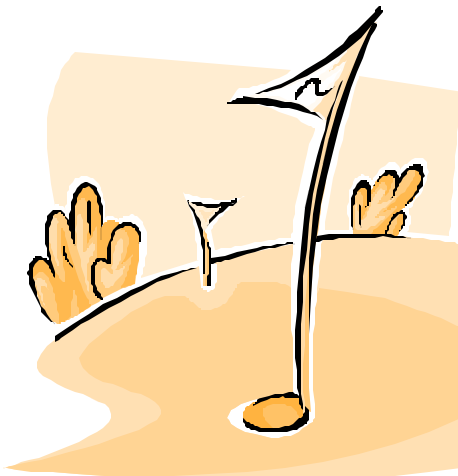
GDOT employees have been hard at work with Back to Basics in 2003! During the months of January and February, 687 potholes were reported. For the months of March and April, GDOT employees identified 442 malfunctioning streetlights. Thanks to you, streets are safer, brighter and lasting longer.

In January, the Back To Basics Enhancement Team was formed to identify ways to take the program to the next level. To date, the team has completed an employee survey and used the feedback to undertake several improvements. Accomplishments thus far include: easier-to-read reports and new bulletin boards; additional ways to report problems via the B2B HOTLINE 373-2417 and WEB FORM <http://citynet/transportation/b2b.htm>; and B2B notepads. The team is currently working on a new logo and adding new incentives and rewards. Be on the lookout for the B2B "team challenge" which will be posted by the end of June.

Congratulations to our top performers for first quarter:

1. Chuck Green
2. Margie Chrismon
3. Donna Mitchell

Keep up the good work!





Tamika Polk

New GTA Customer Service Representative Responds to SCAT Riders

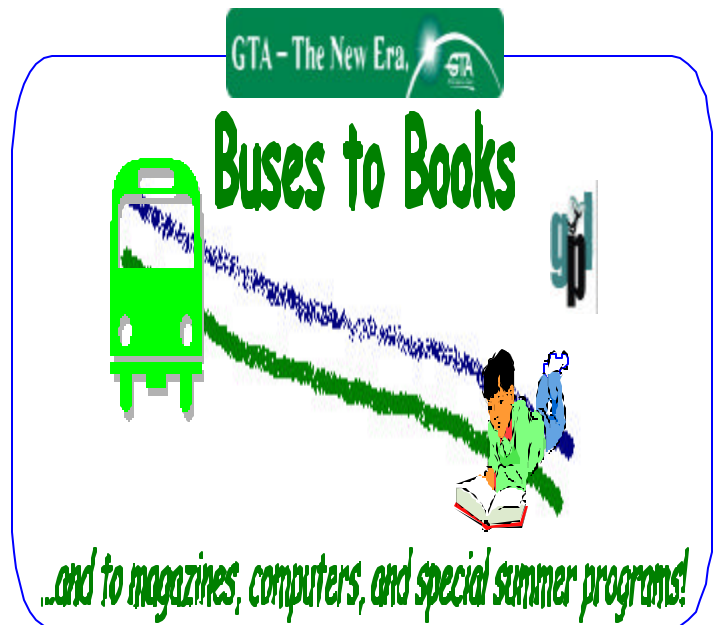
Tamika Polk is no stranger to GTA bus riders. A regular user of both the Fixed Route Bus Service and SCAT ADA Paratransit Service herself, Tamika states that she enjoys her job as a Customer Service Representative, and feels it is a good way for her to assist riders who are disabled. Tamika responds to callers who have complaints or concerns about the SCAT service, and makes a concerted effort to contact riders with visual impairments whenever there is information that needs to be disseminated to the community.

Tamika brings to the job a unique understanding of the issues relating to SCAT. Drawing on her own personal experiences and training in Special Education, Tamika has been instrumental in tutoring persons with visual impairments on the use of the computer screen user, JAWS. As a person who is visually impaired, she knows full well the importance of making the service more integrated and accessible for all users. She is currently taking a conversational Spanish course to help her reach out to the Spanish-speaking community. Tamika (along with her service companion, "Moses") has proven to be an added asset to the Greensboro Transit Authority. For questions or comments relating to SCAT, Tamika can be reached at 373-3281.

Buses To Books' Program Encourages Reading

The Buses to Books Reading Program is back again by popular demand. Sponsored, in part, by the Greensboro Transit Authority and the Greensboro Public Library, the 10-week program seeks to promote literacy among school-aged children from ages 6 to 17 years old, as well as encourage ridership on GTA buses. Students who show their library card at any branch library will be provided a free weekly transit pass. The passes will be color-coded each week to encourage students to visit the library at least once a week. Students are further encouraged to participate in a writing contest at the end of the program to discuss their trips to the library on the bus. Winners from three age groups will be recognized by the GTA Board and given a special award.

The program will begin on Monday, June 16, 2003 and continue through Sunday, August 24, 2003. Interested persons are encouraged to contact their local library or the GTA office at 373-2634 for further details.





State Recognizes GTA Bus Driver in Roadeo Competition



Robin Dillon

Robin Dillon, a veteran paratransit driver for the Greensboro Transit Authority (GTA), was recognized again this year in the North Carolina Public Transportation Roadeo, sponsored by the North Carolina Public Transportation Association and the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Out of a total of 34 participants across the state, Dillon placed first in the van competition, which requires participants to pass both driving and written tests. Participants are further scored on personal appearance, knowledge of wheelchair securement and pre-trip inspection. In the Light Transit Vehicle (LTV) competition, formerly known as the Cutaway, Dillon scored third out of a total of 24 participants across the state.

Dillon is not new to the competition. She has placed in the top 10 in the van category each year since 2000 when she went on to place fifth in the state competition. Dillon has received several awards from GTA including Safety Awards and Driver of the Month Awards. In 1997, she received the Paratransit Driver of the Year Award. "I enjoy doing roadeos...it gives me a chance to have fun and gain experience. But most of all, getting to meet drivers and other folk from different (transit) properties", she says.

A paratransit driver with the Greensboro Transit Authority for 14 years, Dillon says she enjoys working with people with special needs. "They give many, many words of gratitude, praise, along with much wisdom. I feel like by watching them, I can tackle anything in life that is brought my way."

The Roadeo competition was held on June 1, 2003 in Wilmington, N. C. Other participants from GTA included Elsworth Southern, Julius Moore, Jr. and Paul Mitchell.

GTA Moves Ahead With New Orion Buses

The Greensboro Transit Authority is pleased to announce the arrival of ten (10) new Orion buses to replace its aging fleet. Characterized by its low emission and high fuel economy, the Orion bus has long been one of the most trusted buses in transit service. Three of the ten buses rolled out on Friday, May 16, 2003 with the remaining seven placed into service the following Monday. Riders and drivers alike now experience a more comfortable and enjoyable ride on a fleet that is 100 percent accessible to meet the needs of the disabled community. Bikers also enjoy the added convenience of bike racks on each of the new buses.

The Greensboro Transit Authority provides fixed-route bus service that operates along 14 routes during the day on weekdays, extended evening service, which is essentially a combination of daytime routes, and weekend service that operate on both Saturdays and Sundays. In addition to the 14 fixed routes, the Greensboro Transit Authority operates three connector routes that serve outlying areas beyond the fixed route bus service and one shuttle service. Riders use the service daily to travel to work, medical appointments and other discretionary trips. Despite its aged fleet, GTA has been able to experience minimum breakdowns and disruption to its service. Annual ridership on the bus service increased by 11 percent from last fiscal year, placing GTA's annual ridership at 2.2 million riders.

A special ceremonial run with GTA Board members took place at the GTA Transit Facility located at 320 E. Friendly Avenue on Thursday, May 15, 2003 at 5:00 p.m. to dedicate the new vehicles. Users and operators have expressed great satisfaction with the performance of the new buses.





EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION CEREMONY



Left to right, Michael, Don, Jim



*TEAM OF THE MONTH
Left to right, Jim, Ja'Tia, Linda, Michael, Karen, Tonya, Michelle*



Employee of the Month Members



ACC TEAM



*Service Award
Left to right ,Bernard, Dale, Jim*



Employee Recognition Ceremony



Employee Recognition Ceremony



*Employee of the Year
Paul Wyrick*